

Christmas Day

Hebrews 1: 1-12 & John 1: 1-14

Christmas is not just a holiday like any others. It is the foundational mystery of our Christian faith because it marks the beginning of the redeeming work of God. It reminds us of what had been announced by the prophet of the Old Testament: how God decided to come into our humanity so that we can again have access to Him.

The Prophets had announced his coming.

Micah prophesied of the pre-existence of the Messiah to come - Mic 5:2 "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.

2. Isaiah spoke of the King to come as "Everlasting Father" – Isa 9:6-7 "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this."

3. Zechariah recorded the Messiah's own promise to come - Zech 2:10-11 "Shout and be glad, O Daughter of Zion. For I am coming, and I will live among you," declares the Lord. "Many nations will be joined with the Lord in that day and will become my people. I will live among you, and you will know that the Lord almighty has sent me to you.

God is now with us.

"The Word became flesh and dwelt among us." The word for "dwelt" is the word for "set up a tent" in Greek. I used to think that this implied mainly that he was here only temporarily. But when I looked up all the places this word appears in the New Testament, I found that it doesn't imply temporary status. For example, in [Revelation 21:3](#) where the eternal new heavens and new earth are described, it says, "Behold the dwelling [tent!] of God is with men. He will dwell [pitch his tent!] with them, and they shall be his people."

I think what pitching a tent with us implies is that God wants to be on familiar terms with us. He wants to be close. He wants a lot of interaction. If you come into a community and build a huge palace with a wall around it, it says one thing about your desires to be with the people: you don't want to be bothered by the "noise" and "smell" around you; you just want to separate yourself from the rest of the community. But if you pitch a tent in my backyard, you will probably use my

bathroom and eat often at my table. This is why God became human. He came to pitch a tent in our human backyard so that we would have a lot of dealings with him. He will eat with us; he will interact with us.

The implications of “the Word was made flesh”?

What is the connection between all this revelation and us? In John 1: 16, we read "And from his fullness have we all received grace upon grace."

This means that God came not just to show us grace but to be gracious to us.

God doesn't just want to load your head with knowledge about his truth and grace, he wants you to receive it and experience it. This Christmas he wants to give you personally a foundation of truth and reality to stand on, so you won't collapse under stress. This Christmas he wants to treat you with grace—to forgive all your sins—all of them! —to take away all your guilt, to make your conscience clean, to help you with your problems, to give you strength for each day, and to fill you with hope and joy and peace. And that is the Good News of Christmas!

Let's pray and thank God for sending His Son, Jesus! Dear Lord, thank you that you love us. Thank you for sending your Son, Jesus, to be here with us. Thank you for Christmas. We love you. Amen.